

REMARKS

Claims 1-104 are pending in the subject application. Claims 1-104 are subject to a restriction requirement and/ or an election of species requirement. In the Office Communication mailed May 7, 2003, Applicants were requested to elect one of the previously identified species as the Response dated March 26, 2003 had elected without traverse claims 1-76 directed to the patentably distinct invention identified as Group I in the Office Action mailed February 26, 2003.

The Office Action mailed February 26, 2003, had provided that the pending claims are directed to more than one patentably distinct species. Specifically, the claims are directed to the following species: Species A, Figs. 2A-B; Species B, Fig. 2C; Species C, Fig. 2D; Species D, Figs. 3A-B; Species E, Fig. 3C; Species F, Fig. 3D; Species G, Fig. 3E; Species H, Figs. 4A-C; and Species I, Figs. 5A-C. The Examiner further provided that claims 1, 22, 33, 38, 43, 48, 68, 74, 77, 87, and 98 were generic to the plurality of disclosed patentably distinct species.

Applicants submit that prosecution on the merits should be restricted to the following claims if the genus and/ or sub-generic claim also is/are not finally held allowable. In this regard, Applicants elect, with traverse, Species A including Figs. 2A-B presently embodied in claims 1-76.

Applicants traverse the election requirement on the basis that, while the claims of the identified species are drawn to more than one distinct species, a search for any of the identified species would involve the same prior art (i.e., same classes/subclasses). As such, Applicants respectfully submit that, since a comprehensive search would involve consideration of the subject matter of all species, for efficiency all the species could be prosecuted at the same time.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in a condition for allowance.

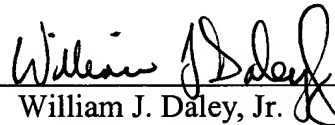
Early and favorable action is requested.

Applicant believes that additional fees are not required for consideration of the within Response. However, if for any reason a fee is required, a fee paid is inadequate or credit is owed for any excess fee paid, you are hereby authorized and requested to charge Deposit Account No. 04-1105.

Respectfully submitted,
EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP

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By:



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